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Industrial Development Board

Seventeenth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 8th MEETING

Held at the Vienna International Centre, Vienna,
on Friday, 27 June 1997, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. I. POSTA (Hungary)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

INTRODUCTION OF DRAFT DECISIONS (IDB.17/L.2-L.10)

1. **The PRESIDENT** said that agenda items 4-21 were still open for the adoption of decisions. A number of draft decisions, most of which had already been discussed in the informal consultations, were now before the Board for consideration (IDB.17/L.2-L.10).

2. **Mr. BØJER** (Denmark), speaking as chairman of the informal consultations, said that the present session had been characterized by the large number of substantive agenda items for which no draft decisions had been submitted. The nine draft decisions before the Board, which included seven that were the result of discussions held during four meetings of the informal consultations, would have been still fewer but for a number of procedural requirements. Attention had been focused primarily on the future role and functions of UNIDO. The definition of new parameters under which the Organization would be expected to operate would remain the Board's overriding concern for the next few months.

3. **The PRESIDENT** said that he was submitting the draft decisions approved in the informal consultations to the Board as his drafts.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR 1996 ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE ORGANIZATION, INCLUDING PROGRESS REPORT ON SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES (*continued*) (IDB.17/2, IDB.17/10 and Add.1 and Add.2)

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNIDO REFORM (*continued*) (IDB.17/19, IDB.17/24 and Corr.1; IDB.17/CRP.5)

4. **The PRESIDENT** said that no draft decisions had been submitted on agenda items 4 and 5. He proposed that the Board take note of the information provided by the Director-General on those subjects.

5. *It was so decided.*

FOLLOW-UP TO THE SEVENTH SPECIAL SESSION: DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN OF THE INTERSESSIONAL WORKING GROUP ON THE FUTURE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF UNIDO (*continued*) (IDB.17/24 and Corr.1, IDB.17/25; IDB.17/CRP.5, IDB.17/CRP.7; IDB.17/L.2, IDB.17/L.10)

6. **The PRESIDENT** drew attention to draft decision

7. **Mr. PAPULI** (Acting Secretary, Policy-making Organs) pointed out that the word "draft" appearing in the first line of the annex to the draft decision had been included in error and should be deleted.

8. *The draft decision, as corrected, was adopted.*

9. **The PRESIDENT** said that the draft decision just adopted contained indications regarding the format and presentation of the programme and budget proposals for 1998-1999, including two levels of resource ceiling resulting from indicative reductions of 10 and 20 per cent. The Secretariat was accordingly requested to present budgetary proposals in accordance with those indicative levels to the Programme and Budget Committee.

10. In response to the discussions at the current session and with the concurrence of the Board, he requested the Secretariat to present a third budgetary proposal based on an indicative reduction of 30 per cent, with the understanding that it would be considered on an equal basis with the other two submissions.

11. **Mr. BENMOUSSA** (Morocco) said that his delegation acknowledged the efforts expended in achieving the adoption, by consensus, of the business plan on the future role and functions of UNIDO, but was not fully in agreement with its contents. The conceptual approach pursued by the intersessional working group was inconsistent with the prevailing situation in the developing world, and the strategy of arbitrarily implementing budget reductions was at odds with the aims of revitalizing the Organization and improving its efficiency.

12. On the basis of actual or announced departures of some major contributors, reform negotiations had been initiated with a view to rescuing UNIDO, increasing its international credibility, improving the management of its budget, concentrating its core activities, strengthening its field representation, reducing its administrative costs, raising its operational performance, enhancing its level of expertise and improving staff motivation, thereby enabling the Organization to emerge reinvigorated and able to meet the challenges of liberalization and globalization.

13. The new globalization ideology, in which the world's benefits were seen as flowing out equitably and uniformly across the entire planet, could not be further from reality. It might be noted, by way of illustration, that Cable News Network's 55 million potential viewers represented barely one per cent of the world's population,

never seen the printed word or witnessed a televised or even a radio broadcast, and that for a significant proportion of humankind the Internet was an unattainable illusion.

14. Experts, decision makers and even representatives of the developed countries all too often overlooked the uneven composition of the world with its enclaves of prosperity and pockets of competitiveness surrounded by the poverty, suffering and deprivation of billions of men, women and children. However, far from constituting a threat to civilization, liberalization and globalization could indeed prove to be the opportunity of the coming century if pursued in a spirit of cooperation and mutual support, with due regard for the marginalized populations and for the countries excluded from the global integration process.

15. Outright rejection of State intervention and unqualified promotion of the private sector meant switching from one extreme to the other. The Director-General, in his message to the special session of the General Assembly on the implementation of Agenda 21, had stated that the solution could not be left to global market forces, and that the private sector could not be expected to solve all ills. There could be no sound functioning of markets or agreed rules for deregulating the economy or privatizing public enterprises or scientific and technological advancement without the existence of strong Governments capable of establishing their leadership on the basis of legitimate institutions.

16. The introduction of ideological elements into what should be an essentially pragmatic matter was to be avoided, since economic success and progress towards sustainable development were achieved not by the adoption of a given model or the amount of assistance granted, but by the vigorous implementation of rational and practical policies over an extended period, primarily through constructive cooperation between public-sector activity and private-sector initiative.

17. It could be argued that globalization in its current form was causing economies to move towards short-term patterns of production through the shortening of the useful life of products and the increase in temporary and flexible employment, with available resources being rapidly rendered obsolete and non-recyclable. Human labour and social relationships bore the brunt. Globalization was enabling large networks of multinational firms to make profitable use of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) at minimal cost. One might therefore justifiably question the relevance of UNIDO's refocusing of its activities, whereby almost exclusive priority was accorded to SME development despite the diverse industrialization needs of the developing world.

been quickly dashed by the combined effects of new budgetary policies and the developing countries' diminishing strategic importance to the developed countries. The accrued dividends of peace were currently estimated at close on 1,000 billion dollars; however, reinvestment of those savings in restructuring armaments industries and in safeguarding jobs did not justify the decline in official development assistance (ODA), now at its lowest level for 45 years. Regrettably, budgetary restrictions introduced by the developed countries targeted primarily development assistance and contributions to international organizations' budgets.

19. A few revealing facts would serve to demonstrate the divide between rich and poor. Export subsidies granted by the developed countries on agricultural and mining products far exceeded the sums granted by way of international assistance; the wealth of some 350 dollar billionaires surpassed that of half the world's population, and the combined income of three billion individuals was considerably less than the gross national product (GNP) of individual major contributors such as France, Germany and Japan, the latter two of which were calling for drastic reductions in UNIDO's regular budget, at the risk of bringing about the collapse of the Organization.

20. Member States' contributions were based on the same scale of assessments and calculated using the same equation. Those States should accordingly accept the position in which their prosperity placed them and participate according to their capacities. A strong appeal should be made to all those in arrears, including the United States of America, to settle their outstanding debts and thereby comply with international law.

21. While not wishing to exclude other countries, including those with economies in transition, where hundreds of millions of people were living below the absolute poverty line, he believed that UNIDO should accord priority attention to Africa, the world's least developed continent, whose increasing impoverishment could be illustrated with telling effect by a few statistics. Over the past 30 years, the average income of one African inhabitant had fallen from 14 to 7 per cent of that of a person living in a developed country; sub-Saharan Africa's 47 countries accounted for only 2.4 per cent of world GNP; Africa's 3 per cent share of world trade in the mid-1950s was now below 1.5 per cent; the commercial operations of the African continent's poorest countries represented barely 0.3 per cent of total world trade, and sub-Saharan Africa spent twice as much on servicing its external debt as on education and health care. Starved of direct foreign investment, Africa had the world's lowest manufacturing output rate of 0.1 per cent. The least developed countries (LDCs) and Africa thus had a press-

its recent meeting in Denver. How then could the Organization's main contributors present at that meeting now call for further cuts in an already drastically reduced budget?

22. He was even more concerned to note that the budgetary reduction scenarios did not take account of the critical mass of key departments but presupposed a further massive and demoralizing round of staff separations. Worse still, the requested cuts signalled a similar fall in voluntary contributions to the Industrial Development Fund.

23. His delegation would continue to strive, between now and the next sessions of the Programme and Budget Committee and the General Conference, to secure a reconsideration of the conceptual and budgetary approaches that would lead to a revitalization of UNIDO and prevent the undermining of its existence.

24. **Mr. FATUNLA** (Nigeria) said that his delegation fully endorsed the remarks of the representative of Morocco.

25. **Mr. ABOUZEID** (Egypt) said that his delegation agreed with all that the Moroccan representative had said. While Egypt had joined the consensus concerning the business plan on UNIDO's future role and functions, it would have preferred a reconsideration of the activities that were to be discontinued and had hoped that the statements made by many developing countries, particularly regarding their need for UNIDO's assistance, might have been taken more fully into account.

26. **Mr. KHALIL** (Tunisia), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that it had been agreed that the proposed 1998-1999 programme and budgets should be based on the programmes elaborated in the business plan, reflecting the changes in UNIDO's membership, the discontinuation of some activities, the streamlining of organizational structures and the introduction of efficiency-enhancing measures. That basis in itself constituted one budget reduction scenario, to which he would like the Secretariat to give consideration when preparing its budget proposals.

27. **Mr. MOHAMED** (Sudan) said that he supported the statement made by the previous speaker.

28. **The PRESIDENT** drew attention to draft decision IDB.17/L.10 entitled "Financial situation of UNIDO".

29. *The draft decision was adopted.*

DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES FOR INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (*continued*) (IDB.17/3)
ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (*continued*) (IDB.17/8)

INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENT PROMOTION (*continued*) (IDB.17/23; IDB.17/CRP.3)

PRIVATE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT (*continued*) (IDB.17/11)

30. **The PRESIDENT** said that no draft decisions had been submitted on agenda items 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11. He proposed that the Board take note of the information provided by the Director-General and the Secretariat on those subjects.

31. *It was so decided.*

32. **The PRESIDENT** said that the president of the International Business Advisory Council (IBAC) had been unable to address the Board during its consideration of agenda item 11 but had submitted a letter setting out IBAC's recommendations. That letter would be made available to delegations.

THE REGIONAL DIMENSION:

(a) AFRICA, IN PARTICULAR THE SECOND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT DECADE FOR AFRICA

(b) ARAB COUNTRIES PROGRAMME FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT, INCLUDING TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE

(c) SPECIAL PROGRAMME FOR THE INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OF ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

(d) REGIONAL COOPERATION PROGRAMME FOR THE INDUSTRIAL RECOVERY OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN

(*continued*) (IDB.17/16, IDB.17/18, IDB.17/20, IDB.17/22, IDB.17/26; IDB.17/CRP.4; IDB.17/L.5)

33. **The PRESIDENT** drew attention to draft decision IDB.17/L.5 on sub-item (a), "Africa, in particular the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa".

34. *The draft decision was adopted.*

35. **The PRESIDENT** said that no draft decisions had been submitted on sub-items (b), (c) and (d). He proposed that the Board take note of the information provided by

36. *It was so decided.*

INDUSTRIALIZATION OF THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (*continued*) (IDB.17/4)

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT (*continued*) (IDB.17/14)

UNIDO CONTRIBUTION TO THE SYSTEM-WIDE ACTION PLAN ON DRUG ABUSE CONTROL (*continued*) (IDB.17/7)

FIELD REPRESENTATION (*continued*) (IDB.17/9)

37. **The PRESIDENT** said that no draft decisions had been submitted on agenda items 13, 14, 15 and 16. He proposed that the Board take note of the information provided by the Director-General on those subjects.

38. *It was so decided.*

39. **Mr. HOLQUIN** (Ecuador) said that, in his delegation's view, the documentation provided on agenda item 16 concerning field representation did not reflect the principles of proportionality, geographical distribution and decentralization.

PERSONNEL MATTERS:

(a) UNITED NATIONS JOINT STAFF PENSION FUND

(b) INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

(*continued*) (IDB.17/5; IDB.17/CRP.1 and Corr.1, IDB.17/CRP.8; IDB.17/L.6, IDB.17/L.7)

40. **The PRESIDENT** drew attention to draft decision IDB.17/L.7 entitled "Personnel matters".

41. *The draft decision was adopted.*

42. **The PRESIDENT** drew attention to draft decision IDB.17/L.6 on sub-item (a), "United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund", pointing out that the text still contained two blank spaces. With regard to the first, under "Members", he had been informed that a candidate from Austria, Ms. Bruck-Friedrich, would be recommended. With regard to the second, under "Alternate members", he wished to propose that, in the interests of equitable representation, a candidate from the Group of 77 be recommended and that a new paragraph (c) be added, as follows: "Takes note that one additional candidature for the election of an alternate member of the UNIDO Staff Pension Committee will be provided directly to the

44. *The draft decision, as amended, was adopted.*

JOINT INSPECTION UNIT (*continued*) (IDB.17/13)

45. **The PRESIDENT** said that no draft decision had been submitted on agenda item 18. He proposed that the Board take note of the information provided by the Secretariat on the subject.

46. *It was so decided.*

MATTERS RELATED TO INTERGOVERNMENTAL, NON-GOVERNMENTAL, GOVERNMENTAL AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS (*continued*) (IDB.17/12, IDB.17/21; IDB.17/L.3, IDB.17/L.4)

47. **The PRESIDENT** said that the Bureau had reviewed the information provided on one intergovernmental organization wishing to enter into an appropriate relationship agreement with UNIDO, which was referred to in document IDB.17/21. He drew attention to draft decision IDB.17/L.3 relating to that intergovernmental organization.

48. *The draft decision was adopted.*

49. **The PRESIDENT** said that the Bureau had reviewed the applications for consultative status with UNIDO from two non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which were referred to in document IDB.17/12. He recommended to the Board the adoption of draft decision IDB.17/L.4 concerning those applications.

50. **Mr. PAPULI** (Acting Secretary, Policy-making Organs), replying to a question raised by the representative of Turkey, said that, following the Secretariat's past practice of according consultative status to various kinds of NGOs, not just to specialized ones, it had been felt that such status could be granted to the International Multiracial Shared Cultural Organization (IMSCO) on that basis. IMSCO had a broad mandate, being concerned with a number of developmental issues. Its activities which related to the work of UNIDO were set out on page 3 of document IDB.17/12.

51. *The draft decision was adopted.*

PREPARATIONS FOR THE SEVENTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE (*continued*) (IDB.17/15; IDB.17/L.9)

52. **The PRESIDENT** drew attention to draft decision

PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND DATE OF THE EIGHTEENTH SESSION (IDB.17/CRP.2; IDB.17/L.8)

54. **The PRESIDENT** drew attention to draft decision IDB.17/L.8, pointing out that blank spaces had been left in paragraph (d) pending agreement on the dates for holding the second part of the Board's eighteenth session. The alternative periods available were 3-7 November and 17-21 November 1997.

55. **Mr. FÖRSTER** (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the European Union, and **Mr. KHALIL** (Tunisia), speaking on behalf of the African Group, expressed a preference for the latter period.

56. **Ms. OK** (Turkey) requested the postponement of a decision on the dates in order to allow delegations time to check their other commitments during those periods.

57. **Mr. MAYRHOFER-GRÜNBÜHEL** (Austria) suggested that, if no agreement could be reached at the current session, the intersessional working group should be authorized to fix the dates at one of its first meetings.

58. **The PRESIDENT** said that no major policy-making organ of any other international organization was due to meet during the periods in question. It was necessary to reach a decision promptly in order to ensure the availability of conference facilities at the Vienna International Centre. Two groups of States had indicated a preference for the period 17-21 November 1997. If he heard no objections, he would take it that the Board wished to adopt the draft decision incorporating those dates.

59. *It was so decided.*

60. *The draft decision, as amended, was adopted.*

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT (IDB.17/L.1)

61. **Mr. TOOTOONCHIAN** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, owing to time constraints, the report (IDB.17/L.1) contained some blank spaces. The final report would, however, duly reflect the events of the entire session and the decisions adopted.

62. **The PRESIDENT** said that, if he heard no objections, he would take it that the Board wished to adopt the draft report as a whole on the understanding that the Rapporteur would finalize it in consultation with the Friends of the Rapporteur as soon as possible after the close of the session.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

64. **Mr. DE MARIA Y CAMPOS** (Director-General) said that he greatly appreciated the strong commitment shown by all delegations in the discussions during the session, whose outcome was reflected primarily in the adoption of the business plan. Member States had now defined the framework for UNIDO's future activities and had established indicative budgetary scenarios for their implementation. The Secretariat had undertaken to present its first detailed programme and budget proposals for each of those scenarios by early August. The Organization's budget would, for the first time, be based on a fully programmatic approach, clearly showing the resources allocated to, and the outputs envisaged under, the programme clusters identified in the business plan. That would allow the future output-oriented monitoring of UNIDO's activities and constituted the first step towards establishing performance criteria as proposed by the Swiss delegation.

65. The Secretariat would bring together its professional expertise in carrying out an in-depth programmatic analysis to translate the principles of the business plan into effective, integrated programmes. As stated by the representative of the Republic of Korea among others, the Secretariat should be allowed to express its views more effectively on UNIDO's future. The best interests of the Organization's reform would be served through the assistance which the Secretariat, with its accumulated knowledge and experience, could provide. From the outset, he had provided Member States with the Secretariat's assessments in a spirit of professional responsibility, even when those analyses pointed to serious implications of some reform ideas put forward. That ensured that Member States were aware of all relevant considerations and of the consequences that would arise from decisions taken.

66. With regard to the three proposed budgetary reduction scenarios, he wished to reiterate that he did not believe reform to be equal to budget cuts; on the contrary, UNIDO was in need of additional resources in view of the increasing demand for its services. A 10 per cent reduction scenario could be implemented through the introduction of further efficiency-enhancing measures, greater streamlining of organizational structures and the refocusing of programmes in accordance with the business plan, including the discontinuation of some activities. A 20 per cent reduction scenario would clearly involve significant cuts in substantive programmes and thus reduce UNIDO's capacity to respond to demand, even in regard to those activities identified as priority areas in the business plan. A 30 per cent reduction scenario, as proposed by Japan, would pose a serious challenge to the

would make an in-depth analysis of the implications of such a scenario and present a serious proposal for the consideration of Member States, endeavouring as far as possible to follow the spirit of the business plan. That proposal would entail fundamental and difficult choices regarding the activities that could be maintained and the field representation that could be justified. All Member States' interests, including the remarks made on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Group would be taken into account. As pointed out by the delegation of India, sudden and stiff budgetary reductions could leave UNIDO organizationally anaemic and inadequate. He therefore hoped that, whatever budget scenario was finally adopted, the Programme and Budget Committee would give due consideration to the transitional costs involved and make adequate provision to cover them.

67. A careful review of the operational budget estimates was now required, in view of the position of Germany and Japan regarding their voluntary contributions and in the light of the interest shown by other countries, such as the Netherlands and Denmark, in supporting specific programmes. There had also recently been increases in contributions through self-financing trust funds in some countries and regions. He wished to encourage Member States to give consideration to those matters, with a view to supporting the Organization to the extent possible, and to examine the possibility of studying other sources of income that would provide UNIDO with greater stability in the future.

68. An important asset of UNIDO was its staff. Given the uncertainties surrounding the Organization's future resources, he would exercise cautious and judicious management of personnel matters, particularly concerning external recruitment and senior-level posts. He could not, however, commit himself to an unconditional recruitment freeze, or adopt a wait-and-see attitude regarding contract extensions, at a time when key personnel were leaving the Organization, project approvals and delivery had been rapidly increasing and UNIDO had made important commitments. Those were essential requirements for maintaining staff capacities in highly technical areas.

69. Significant progress had been achieved at the current session in defining a sustainable future role for UNIDO within the overall United Nations system. Joint efforts were needed in order to conclude that process by the forthcoming General Conference session, so that the Organization would be in a position to assume its new functions. That called for determined management on his part and for the full support of all Member States. While the approaching election of a new Director-General presented an additional complication, he hoped that Member States would to the extent possible put aside their national, and sometimes personal, agendas and in a spirit of compromise find a solution in the best interests of UNIDO.

70. The issue of the payment of assessed contributions was more pressing than ever before. In contrast to some statements made concerning UNIDO's present financial situation, the rates of payment of contributions for the current year were similar to those for the previous year and were higher than the average for the United Nations system and many specialized agencies. Nevertheless, as pointed out by the Swiss delegation, further streamlining could only be effective if all Member States paid their assessed contributions fully and without delay. That had to apply also to former Member States, in particular the United States of America. As requested, he would explore all possibilities for collecting that country's arrears of $61 million. However, action by the Board was now necessary in the light of the decision recently adopted by the United States Congress. While the United States refused to fulfil its international obligations, Member States would have to provide the resources to meet the costs of any future separations.

71. **The PRESIDENT** expressed his appreciation to all delegations for their constructive attitude and cooperation, and extended his thanks to the members of the Secretariat for their valuable support, and to the technical staff, conference officers and interpreters, whose efforts had greatly contributed to the successful work of the session.

72. After the customary exchange of courtesies, he declared the seventeenth session of the Industrial Development Board closed.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.